

# Technology Competencies for Libraries in North Carolina

The State Library of North Carolina first created technology competencies in May 2003 after reviewing competencies from libraries across the country; this list is an update of that original set. These competencies are intended to serve as a resource for libraries and library systems in North Carolina.

Supervisors or individuals may use this as a checklist to identify areas where training is needed; create job descriptions; conduct evaluations; and help staff adjust to rapid changes in technology.

The State Library recommends Level I competencies for all library staff; State Library staff will develop its workshops on the premise that these skills are already in place. The State Library recommends Level II competencies for all staff who work with the public. Level III competencies are designed for staff with more specialized duties (virtual reference, web page creation, IT support, etc.).

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## Level I Competencies

These competencies are suggested for all library staff members.

### **Terminology**

- \_\_\_\_\_ have an understanding of:  
Boot, CPU, Monitor, Memory, Hard drive, Diskette, CD Rom, Flash drive/memory stick, Server, Web site, Web page, Link, URL, Operating system (Macintosh, Windows), Browser (Netscape, Internet Explorer), Search engine, PAC

### **Hardware Skills**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Turn a computer on and off correctly
- \_\_\_\_\_ Use mouse, keyboard, and function keys
- \_\_\_\_\_ Recognize importance of backing up files and know how to do so
- \_\_\_\_\_ Printer skills – add paper, change ink cartridge/toner, clear paper jam, cancel print job

### **Operating System Skills**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Find and launch applications from the desktop or menu
- \_\_\_\_\_ Resize, minimize, and maximize windows
- \_\_\_\_\_ Know basic folder and file management (understand the differences between files and folders; create, delete, and rename files and folders; etc.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Copy files onto floppy disks, CDs, flash drives, and other removable media used in your library
- \_\_\_\_\_ Identify active window and switch between open applications

### **Basic Software Skills**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Open and close applications correctly
- \_\_\_\_\_ Open and save a file to a computer's hard drive
- \_\_\_\_\_ Locate and use tutorials and/or help

- \_\_\_\_\_ Switch from one document to another
- \_\_\_\_\_ Print all or part of a document
- \_\_\_\_\_ Use a mouse or keystrokes to cut/copy and paste
- \_\_\_\_\_ Change font size and font type
- \_\_\_\_\_ Scroll within a document

### **Basic Internet Skills**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Access the internet
- \_\_\_\_\_ Interpret URLs
- \_\_\_\_\_ Use navigational buttons: back, home, go, refresh, history
- \_\_\_\_\_ Enter URL by typing or pasting
- \_\_\_\_\_ Perform basic Internet search
- \_\_\_\_\_ Scroll in web page
- \_\_\_\_\_ Search for text in a web page
- \_\_\_\_\_ Print all or part of a web page

### **PC Security Knowledge**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Be familiar with Internet security risks (e.g. email viruses, spy ware)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Be familiar with the security precautions and software used in your library (e.g. firewall)

### **Email Skills**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Know email address
- \_\_\_\_\_ Compose, send, open, read, reply to, forward messages
- \_\_\_\_\_ Store and retrieve email messages
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sort messages by date, subject, sender
- \_\_\_\_\_ Attach a file and open an attachment

### **PC Troubleshooting Skills**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Use the Task Manager to close non-responsive programs
- \_\_\_\_\_ Know when and how to reboot a workstation
- \_\_\_\_\_ Understand cables, power cords, on-off switches on all equipment

### **Local Knowledge**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Know branch or department logins and passwords
- \_\_\_\_\_ Know library web site's URL
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have working knowledge of library's PAC
- \_\_\_\_\_ Know Internet use policy for the public
- \_\_\_\_\_ Use online time sheet and other HR systems
- \_\_\_\_\_ Know rules of conduct for staff regarding email and computer use
- \_\_\_\_\_ Know IT contacts and process for requesting IT assistance
- \_\_\_\_\_ Be familiar with library system's technology competencies
- \_\_\_\_\_ Complete basic circulation check in and check out process

## Level II Competencies

These competencies are suggested for all library staff that work with the public.

### **Electronic mailing list (listserv)**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Subscribe and unsubscribe
- \_\_\_\_\_ Post message
- \_\_\_\_\_ Access archived messages

### **Internet Skills**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Add, use, and manage bookmarks/favorites
- \_\_\_\_\_ Change the default home page
- \_\_\_\_\_ Clear temporary Internet files and clear history
- \_\_\_\_\_ Know common plug ins (Acrobat, Flash)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Be familiar with Web 2.0 applications including blogs, wikis, and social sites (MySpace, Facebook)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Locate and use podcasts, e-books, and e-audiobooks
- \_\_\_\_\_ Prepare workstation for and use features of online classes
- \_\_\_\_\_ Know how/where to look for emerging trends in online applications

### **Searching Strategies**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Locate and use common search engines
- \_\_\_\_\_ Know basic, Boolean, and proximity search concepts
- \_\_\_\_\_ Be familiar with topic specific searching
- \_\_\_\_\_ Evaluate internet search results for relevancy, currency, and accuracy

### **PAC**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Perform keyword, author, and title searches
- \_\_\_\_\_ Use advanced search strategies such as ISBN, format, etc.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Limit, restrict, expand, and sort searches
- \_\_\_\_\_ Determine due date, status, and location of items in the collection
- \_\_\_\_\_ Place requests/holds on items in the collection
- \_\_\_\_\_ View borrower information such as holds, fines and other blocks
- \_\_\_\_\_ Be familiar with finding and using PACs at other library systems

### **NC LIVE and Local Databases**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Know resources available in NC LIVE databases
- \_\_\_\_\_ Know additional databases purchased by your library
- \_\_\_\_\_ Search general and most locally relevant databases in NC LIVE and your local system proficiently
- \_\_\_\_\_ Use limiters and expanders in each database (full text, lexile level, related terms, etc.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Operate printing options (full text, selected text, email, citation only)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Assist patrons select appropriate database for their searches

### **Software Skills**

- Word Processing (such as Microsoft Word or WordPerfect)
- Spreadsheets (such as Microsoft Excel)
- Slide Presentations (such as Microsoft PowerPoint)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Able to determine which application is needed for a project
- \_\_\_\_\_ Find specific text within a document

- \_\_\_\_\_ Insert, move, and resize clip art
- \_\_\_\_\_ Change paragraph formatting (indents, bullets)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Change page setup (margins, portrait/landscape)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Create documents using formatting templates
- \_\_\_\_\_ Create common types of documents (resumes, research papers with footnotes, school presentations)

#### **Public Use Workstation Management and Circulation Software**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Use and troubleshoot local workstation/printer management software
- \_\_\_\_\_ Identify and communicate needs for special needs patrons to IT staff
- \_\_\_\_\_ Know how to use specialized software for special needs patrons
- \_\_\_\_\_ Find, create, and modify all types of borrower records in circulation software
- \_\_\_\_\_ Accept and apply payment of fine
- \_\_\_\_\_ View and print items a borrower currently has checked out
- \_\_\_\_\_ Replace damaged or missing barcode

#### **Coaching Skills**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Have skills to help patrons use computers (workstation log-in, software applications, Internet use, databases, etc.), both one-on-one and in small groups

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### **Level III Competencies**

These competencies are suggested for library staff with specialized duties.

#### **Web Page Creation and Maintenance**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Create a basic web page using library's web page software
- \_\_\_\_\_ Update existing web page using library's web page software
- \_\_\_\_\_ Obtain/renew domain name
- \_\_\_\_\_ Use HTML, XML, scripting, and database enabling to create and update web pages

#### **Audiovisual Equipment Use**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Can locate all A/V equipment in branch
- \_\_\_\_\_ Set up, operate, and troubleshoot all A/V equipment
- \_\_\_\_\_ Set up computer lab for training class and know computer lab capabilities

#### **Virtual/IM Reference**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Know virtual/IM reference policies and procedures
- \_\_\_\_\_ Use virtual/IM reference software proficiently

#### **Technology Management**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Hardware management: install a workstation; add/install a printer; install peripherals (scanner, etc.); install software
- \_\_\_\_\_ Operating systems: understand current operating system platform, memory management, and resource allocation, optimization, and configuration; recover files
- \_\_\_\_\_ Networking: be proficient with networking administration, TCP/IP, proxy servers, and intranets
- \_\_\_\_\_ Specialized system applications: install and troubleshoot print and workstation management systems, server applications, virtual reference systems, and PACs

- \_\_\_\_\_ Security: implement Internet and workstation security; secure user accounts and access to files; implement and maintain firewalls, authentication protocol, and security for proxy servers and remote access
- \_\_\_\_\_ Technology planning: monitor bandwidth capacity and foresee future needs; review equipment placement; prepare and maintain a technology inventory; select replacements/additions; understand hardware/software options for special needs patrons
- \_\_\_\_\_ Emerging trends: understand Web 2.0 applications and how they can benefit library staff and patrons; watch for new software/hardware and know how they can benefit library staff and patrons
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tech support: create FAQ lists; communicate clearly with users; coach users in troubleshooting; create and follow procedures for receiving and processing tech support requests

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Other library competencies are available online. Here are just a few:

- **Information Technology Core Competencies**, <http://www.plcmc.org/public/learning/plcmccorecomp.pdf> (Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County)
- **Library Practitioner Core Competencies**, <http://www.westernco.org/continuum/LCPPfinal.pdf> (Western Council of State Libraries/Continuum of Library Education)
- **Library Staff Competencies**, <http://www.librarysupportstaff.com/4competency.html> (links to additional lists)
- **Ohio Public Library Core Competencies**, <http://www.olc.org/pdf/core.pdf>
- **Setting the Standard: The Development of Competencies for New Jersey Librarians**, [http://www.access.gpo.gov/su\\_docs/fdlp/pubs/proceedings/02pro\\_hermann.pdf](http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/pubs/proceedings/02pro_hermann.pdf)
- **Skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Librarian**, <http://meredith.wolfwater.com/wordpress/index.php/2006/07/17/skills-for-the-21st-century-librarian/> (from Meredith Farkas's blog)
- **Technology Core Competencies for California Library Workers**, [http://www.cla-net.org/included/docs/tech\\_core\\_competencies.pdf](http://www.cla-net.org/included/docs/tech_core_competencies.pdf)
- **Technology Competencies for Library Staff**, <http://rrlc.entrex.com/orgmain.asp?orgID=23&storyID=202> (Rochester [NY] Regional Library Council)